

# A Brief History of US Lepidopterists

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Lepidoptera Course 2017



CALIFORNIA  
ACADEMY OF  
SCIENCES

# John Abbot

1751-1840(41?)

- Arrived in Virginia Sept 16, 1770 from England
- Moved south to Georgia because of the war
- Sold specimens and paintings in London through an agent
- 104 illustrations in “Natural History of the Rarer Lepidopterous Insects of Georgia” by Sir. James Edward Smith, 1797
- Over 5,000 watercolors of American insects, several thousand at the Natural History Museum London
- Most if not all specimens unaccounted for





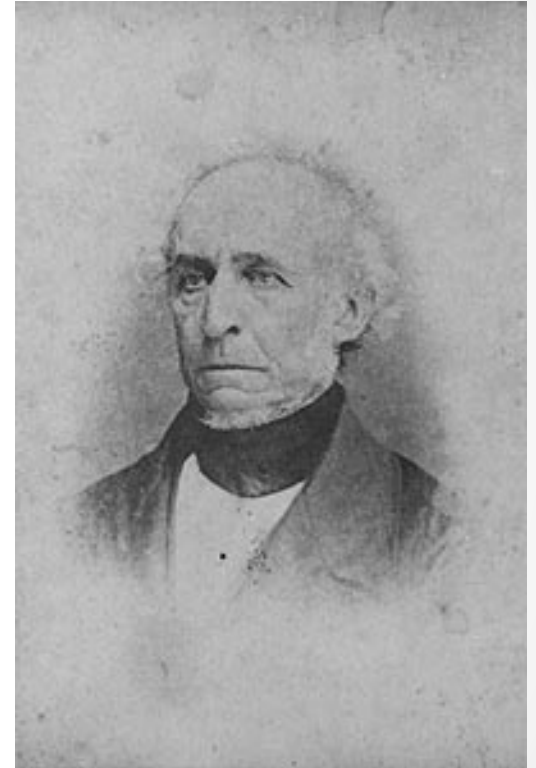
*Papilio Trochus*

*C. G. F. Schumacher*

# John Eatton Le Conte

1784-1860

- Born in New Jersey, Major in US Army.
- Lived in NY but wintered in the south, collected and travelled in Florida & Georgia
- Surveyor – although not a great one
- Co-authored "*Histoire général et iconographie des lepidoptères et des chenilles de l'Amerique septentrionale*" Boisduval, 1833 (many of Abbot's illustrations)

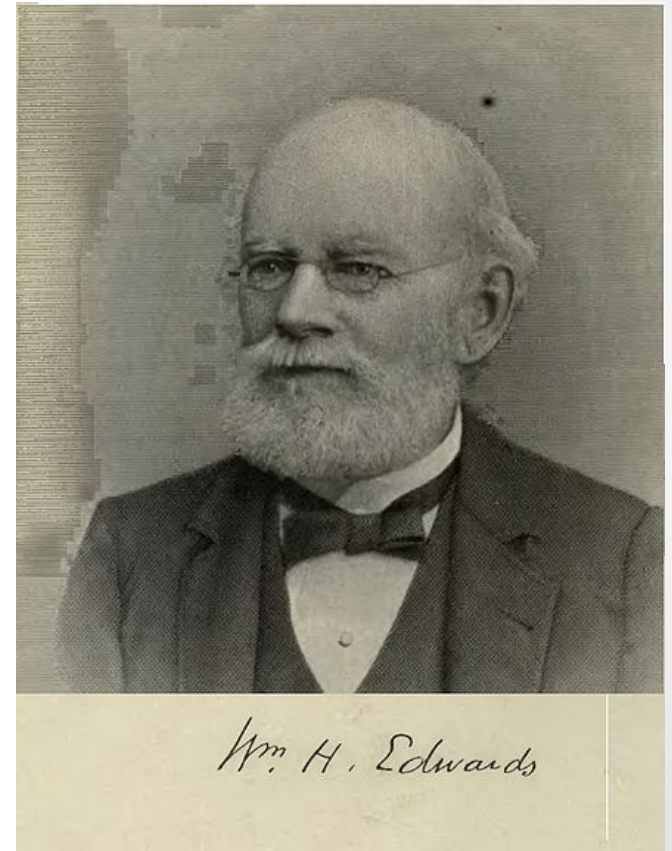




# William Henry Edwards

1822-1909

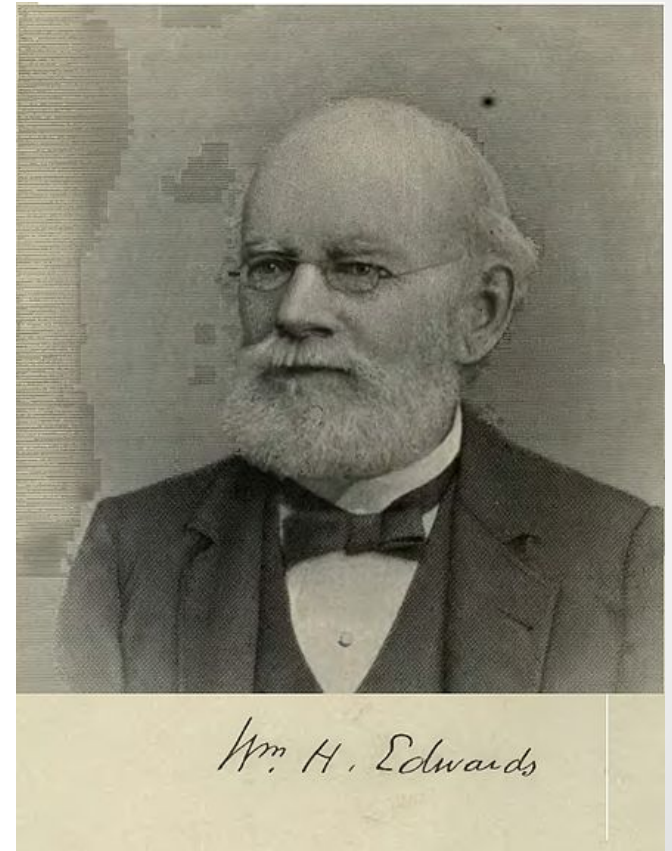
- Born in Hunter, NY
- Educated in law, then president of Kanawah Coal Co.
- 1846 expedition to Brazil, followed by a famous account "Voyage up the River Amazon" in 1847. Inspired Alfred Russel Wallace & Henry W Bates to voyage there in 1848.
- "Butterflies of North America" 1897



# William Henry Edwards

1822-1909

- 250+ papers published
- Many specimens at the California Academy of Sciences
- Corresponded with Darwin
- Challenged Shakespeare's authorship



Types?

W. G. Wright  
San Bernardino. California

Idunas used for  
illustr. Bull N A 1896

SENT BY  
WM. H. EDWARDS,  
Coalburgh, W. Va.



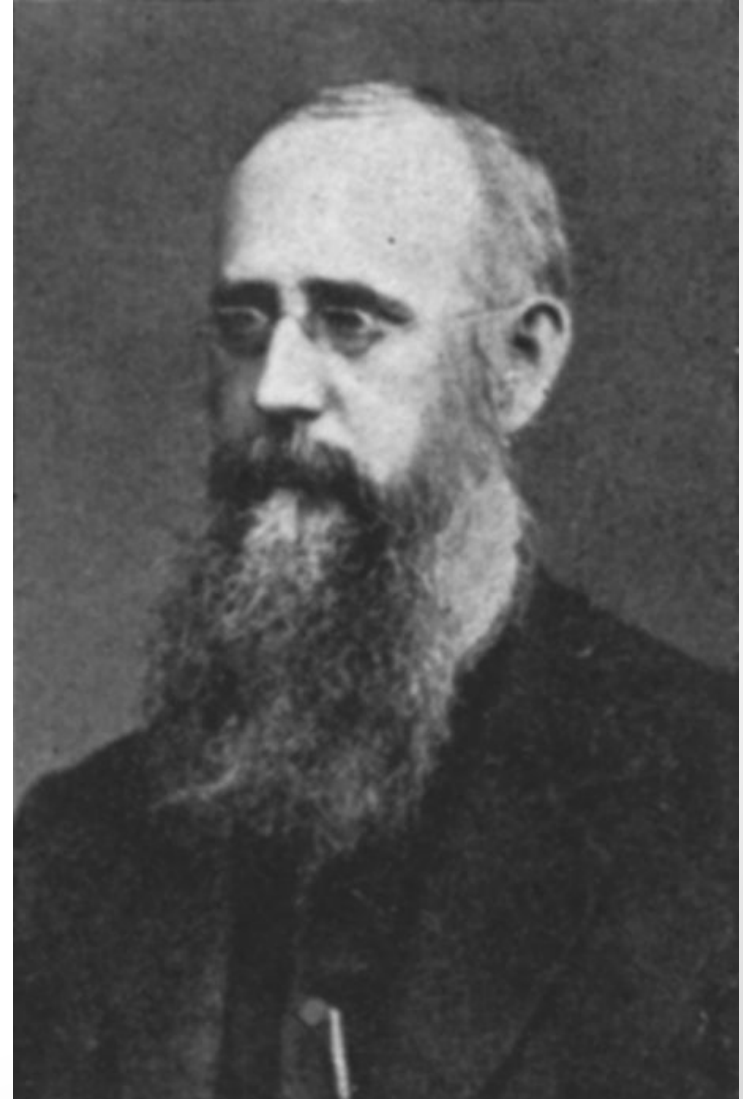
W. H. Edwards  
Coalburgh, Kanawha  
West Va.

Iduna  
pinnator  
lucis  
Fuchs

# F. H. Herman Strecker

1836-1901

- Born in Philadelphia
- 300 new species, 150 ssp
- Talented illustrator
- 200,000+ Leps now at FMNH
- Famous for “acquiring” specimens
- Honorary doctorate in 1890 from Franklin and Marshall





1 *Melitaea alma*, Streck. ♂. 2 *Egle Colagui*, Streck. ♀. 3 *Macroglossa ulalume*, Streck. ♂. 4 *Sph. Vashiti*, Streck. ♂. 5 *Hepialus sangaris*,  
 6 *Gloveria arizonensis*, Pack. ♀. 7 *Coloradia pandora*, Blake ♂. 8 *Pseudohasia hera*, Harris ♂. 9 *P. hera* ♂ aberr. 10 *P. pica*, Wlk. ♂. 11 *P. pica* ♂ v.  
 12 *P. pica* ♂ aberr. 13 *P. mettalli*, Streck. ♀. 14 ♀. 15 *Yponomephidia varia* Wlk. ♂ aberr. 16 *H. varia* hermannhordiae. 17 *H. lilith*, Streck.

# Augustus Radcliffe Grote

1841-1903

- Born in England, moved to the US at 7
- Specialist on Noctuids and Sphingidae – wrote *A Synonymical Catalogue of North American Sphingidae* and an important catalogue- *List of the Lepidoptera of North America*.
- Composer, musician, author.
- Left the US in 1884 for Germany, his collection was sold to the British Museum.

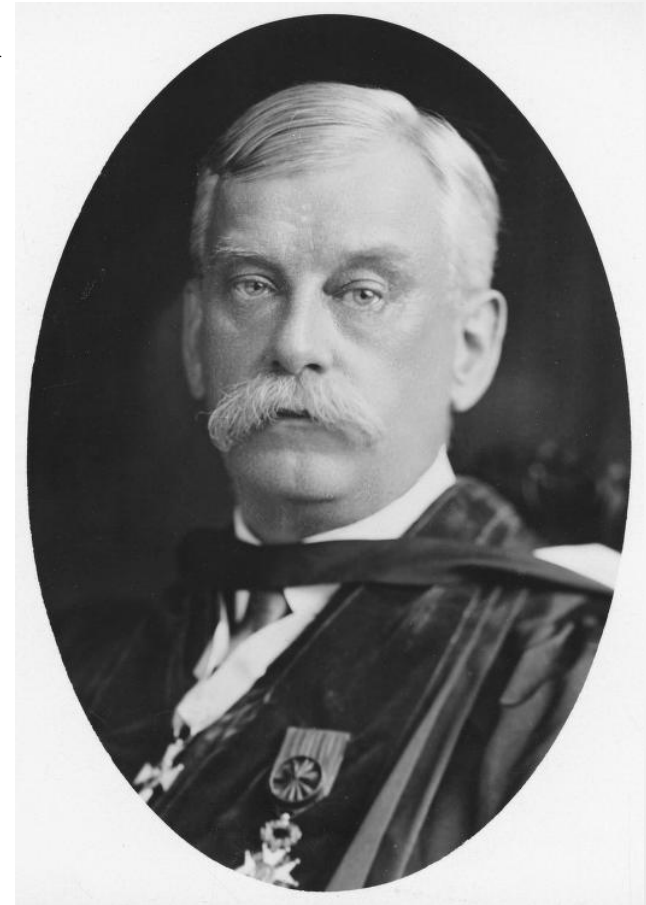


*Hemileuca grotei* Grote & Robinson, 1868

# William Jacob Holland

## 1848-1932

- Born in Jamaica, grew up in North Carolina
- Most well known for *The Butterfly Book* (1898) and *The Moth Book* (1903). Very popular and affordable! \$5 (=\$135 vs. \$4,000)
- Presbyterian minister & 8<sup>th</sup> Chancellor of U of Pittsburgh.
- Director of the Carnegie Museum and trained himself as a paleontologist after appointment.
- Collection of 250,000 specimens @ Carnegie Museum





# John Bernard Smith (Schmidt)

## 1858-1912

- Born in NYC, father was a cabinet maker, creator of the “Schmidt box”
- Trained as a lawyer, left to work under C. V. Riley.
- Assistant curator of Ento at USNM in 1886, resigned to become professor and state ento. of NJ



# William Barnes

1860-1930



# William Barnes

1860-1930

- Born in Decatur, IL – Educated at Harvard
- Foremost surgeon in the midwest,
- Built a massive collection of 500,000+ specimens mostly from US
- Employed curators to take over research and lavishly supported them: J.H. McDunnough, A. W. Lindsey, F. H. Benjamin.
- Sold collection to USNM for \$300,000 (4.35 million today), funds went to support Decatur Memorial Hospital

# William Kearfott

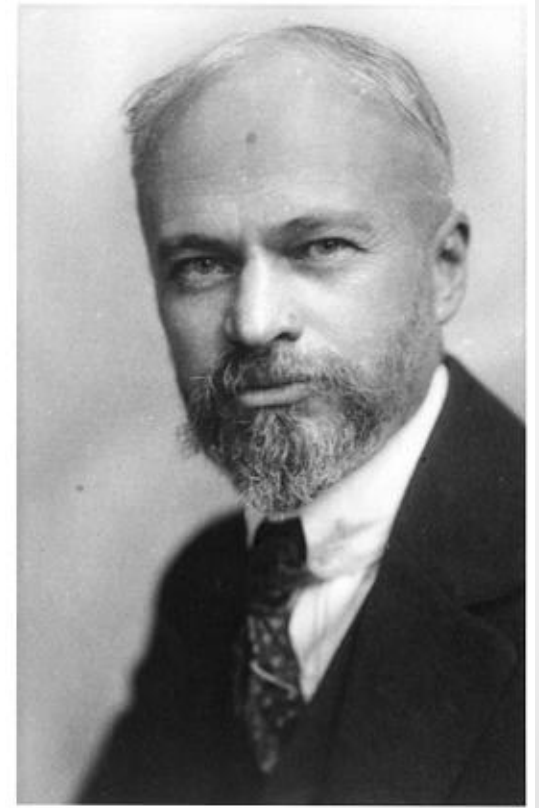
1864-1917

- Prominent Tortricid worker
- Mechanical Engineer
- Famous for names of “barbarous and unmeaning gibberish”
- *bobana, cocana, dodana, fofana, gogana, hohana, kokana, lolana, momana, nonana, popana, rorana, sosana, totana, vovana, zozana.*
- *dandana, fandana, gandana, handana, kandana, mandana, nandana, pandana, randana, sandana, tandana, vandana, wandana.*
- *baracana, caracana, daracana, faracana, haracana, maracana, naracana, yaracana.*

# Harrison G. Dyar

1866-1929

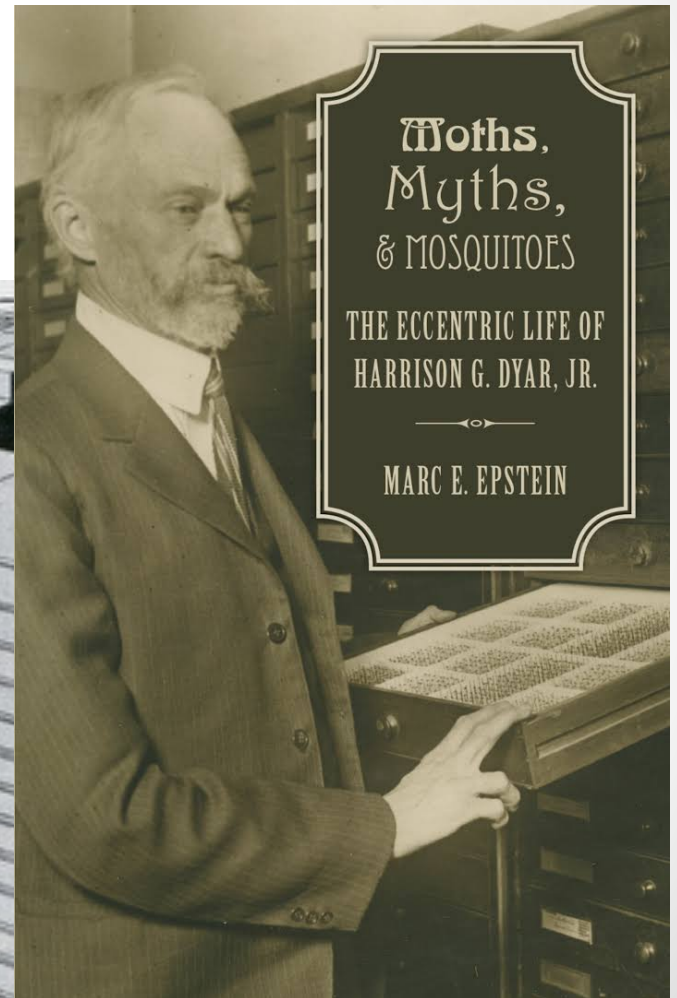
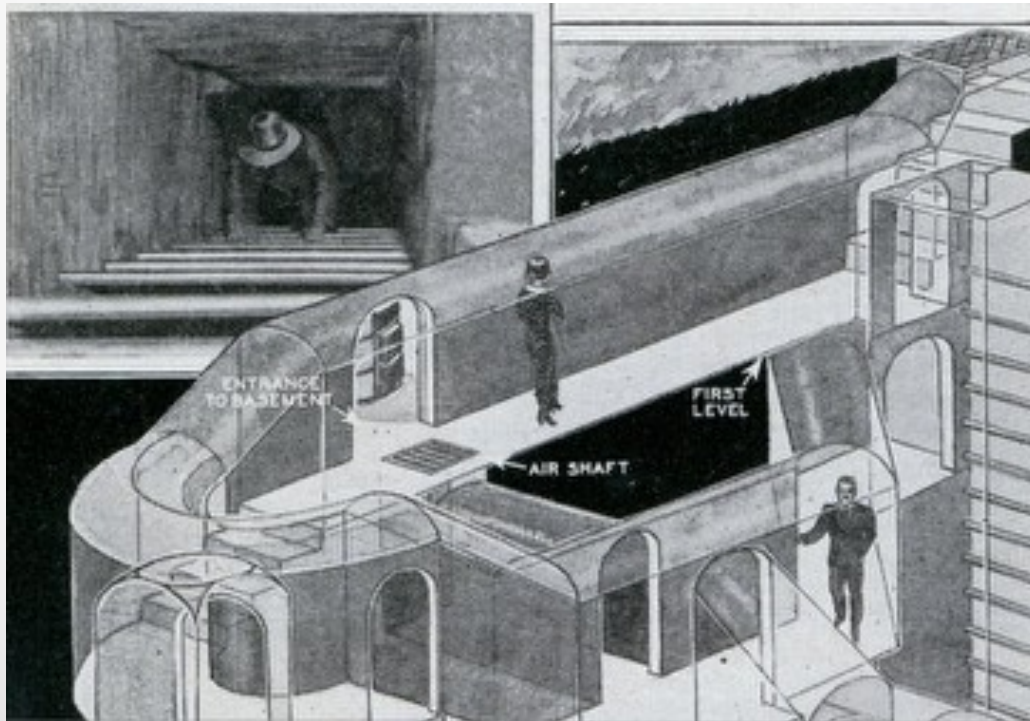
- Born in NYC, educated at MIT in chemistry
- Worked on Lepidoptera, Mosquitoes, and Sawflies
- Dyar's Law of geometric growth of head capsule widths
- Famous for works on Limacodidae, among other odd traits...



# Harrison G. Dyar

1866-1929

- Dyar had two families for 14 years, 5 children
- And extensively tunneled



# August Busck

1870-1944

- Born in Denmark
- Described over 600 species (but only notable and economically important ones)
- One of the first to use genitalia for ID!
- USDA/USNM microlep worker
- Retired at Bishop Museum
- Helped create *Biologia Centralia-Americana*



# James H. McDunnough

1877-1962

- Born in Toronto, Ontario. Professional violinist in Scotland then PhD in Zoology from Berlin.
- Curator for Barnes (\$100/month = ~\$2,700)
- 1<sup>st</sup> president of the Lepidopterists' Society
- Published 67 papers with Barnes, travelled extensively
- Left to CNC as chief of systematic entomology in 1919. Published 199 more papers.
- 3 years at AMNH before retiring back to Canada in 1950.



# Annette Braun



**The Braun Sisters in the Field**

E. Lucy Braun (right) and her sister, Annette Braun, at Lynx Prairie, Adams County, Ohio. Annette is wearing the black-and-white coat mentioned on p. 38. (Photograph courtesy of The Nature Conservancy. Originally printed in the 1973 fall issue of The Nature Conservancy News.)

# Annette Braun

1884-1978

- 1<sup>st</sup> woman to earn a PhD from U Cincinnati
- Described 341 species of NA Moths
- 1926 VP of Entomological Society of America
- Lived and travelled extensively with her sister and botanist Emma Lucy
- Collection of 30,000 (mostly reared) specimens at ANSP
- 4 Major works on microleps
  - *Lithocolletis*, *Elachista*, *Bucculatrix*, *Tischeria* (at 88!)

*Phyllonorycter martiella* (Braun, 1908)



# Foster H. Benjamin

From the library of the University of Illinois



T.H. Frison & F.H. Benjamin in the Barnes Collection: Decatur, IL 1925

# Foster H. Benjamin

1895-1936

- Attended Cornell, worked for Barnes after graduating.
- Described hundreds of species with Barnes.
- Moved to USNM in 1927 and played critical role in uniting the department, also in the Barnes collection moving east (Barnes and Dyar were old rivals)

# John F. Gates Clarke

1905-1990

- Born in Victoria, BC
- Trained as a pharmacist, asked to return for studies on Leps
- Served in Europe and awarded a Bronze Star
- *Catalogue of the Type Specimens of Microlepidoptera in the British Museum* described by Meyrick.
- Chairman of Entomology at Smithsonian 1963-1965
- 547 new species, 71 genera, 2 families. >100 papers.

